

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 RSC-01 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /056 W

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R 041138Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2152

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0113

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER RACHID BEY SOLH

1. MADE THIRTY MINUTES COURTESY CALL THIS MORNING
JAN 4 ON PRIME MINISTER RACHID SOLH. HE IMPRESSED
ME AS A THOUGHTFUL, TACITURN, FRIENDLY INDIVIDUAL.
A SIMPLE MAN IN THE GOOD SENSE OF THE WORD, HE THINKS
BEFORE HE SPEAKS. HE WAS COURTEOUS AND FRIENDLY BUT
IS NO REPEAT NO BACK SLAPPER NOR GIVEN TO IDLE
CHIT-CHAT.

2. I MENTIONED NEWSTOUR AND SENATOR PERCY'S VISIT
WHICH HE WELCOMED AS OCCASION TO GET TO KNOW DIS-
TINGUISHED AMERICANS AND PRESENT THE LEBANESE AND
ARAB CASE TO THEM.

3. HE INQUIRED AS TO MY VIEWS ON THE CURRENT PEACE-
MAKING PROCESS AND I EXPRESSED MY PERSONAL OPTIMISM
NOT WITHSTANDING THE MAJOR PROBLEMS BEING FACED IN
THIS DOMAIN. THE ONLY POINT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER
OBVIOUSLY WANTED TO STRESS WAS THAT OUR CURRENT
EFFORTS ARE CRITICAL AND WE ARE FACED WITH A UNIQUE
AND POSSIBLY FINAL CHANCE OF DEALING WITH MODERATE
ARAB LEADERS SUCH AS SADAT AND KING FAISAL. HE
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CAME BACK TO THIS POINT THREE TIMES, ONLY ONCE MENTION-

ING FAISAL BUT THREE TIMES CITING SADAT AS A MAN
TOTALLY DEDICATED TO PEACE.

4. I TOUCHED ONCE ON OUR DISCUSSION WITH HIS MILITARY
RE ARMS BUT HE EVIDENCED NO PARTICULAR INTEREST OTHER
THAN THE HOPE THAT LEBANON MIGHT BE GIVEN A HIGHER
PRIORITY ON DELIVERIES. HE DID NOT REPEAT NOT BE-
LABOR THIS POINT.

5. NOTWITHSTANDING LURID PRESS REPORTING OF RECENT
ISRAELI INCURSIONS IN THE SOUTHERN LEBANON AND THE
LOSS OF LEBANESE LIVES, HE REFERRED TO LEBANON'S
DIFFICULTIES ONLY IN PASSING. HE DID NOT MENTION
THE LEBANESE COMPLAINT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL.
NEITHER DID I. (WE KNOW IN THIS CONNECTION THAT
FOREIGN OFFICE, KHALIL HADDAD, CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF
THIS MORNING THAT GOL WILL NOT REPEAT NOT SEEK TO
CONVENE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.)

6. I ASKED HIM ABOUT PRESIDENT ASSAD'S VISIT TO
BEIRUT ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 7 AND WHAT HE EXPECTED
WOULD BE ITS RESULTS. HE SAID PRESIDENT ASSAD WAS
RETURNING PRESIDENT FRANJIE'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS
SOMETIME AGO AND THAT THERE WERE A FEW MINOR PROBLEMS
PRINCIPALLY OF A TECHNICAL NATURE THAT WOULD BE DISCUSSED
BETWEEN MINISTERS. VISIT WOULD MERELY REAFFIRM
EXCELLENT RELATIONS CURRENTLY EXISTING BETWEEN THE
TWO PRESIDENTS, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND THE TWO
PEOPLES. ACCORDING TO SOLH THERE WERE NO REPEAT
NO SERIOUS POINTS OF CONTENTION TODAY BETWEEN LEBANON
AND SYRIA.

7. WHILE I EXPRESSED MY PERSONAL GRATIFICATION THAT
OUR RECENT DIFFICULTIES WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT
HAD BEEN SOLVED HE MERELY NODDED IN AGREEMENT.
GODLEY

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